

The Commons

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Settlement Point of View.

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Social Teachings from the Brownings.

"The common problem, yours, mine, everyone's, is—not to fancy what were fair in life. Provided it could be,—but, finding first What may be, then find how to make it fair Up to our means; a very different thing." Browning's Bishop Blougram's Apology.

"The hungry beggar boy...

Contains, himself, both flowers and firmaments, And surging seas and aspable stars, And all that we would push him out of sight In order to see nearer. Let us pray God's grace to keep God's image in repute."

—Mrs. Browning, in "Aurora Leigh."

"The man, most man, with tenderest human hands, Works best for men,—as God in Nazareth.'.... He paused upon the word, and then resumed: 'Fewer programmes: we who have no prescience, Fewer systems: we who are held and do not hold. Less mapping out of masses, to be saved By nations, or by sexes. Fourier's void, And Comte is dwarfed—and Cabot puerile. Subsists no law of life outside of life; No perfect manners without Christian souls; The Christ Himself had been no Lawgiver, Unless He had given the life, too, with the law.'"

A Social Apostolate.

By J. Stitt Wilson.

Prof. Geo. D. Herron, who for seven years occupied the chair of Applied Christianity in Iowa College at Grinnell, and who for all these years has been prominently before the public as a noted teacher of social righteousness, has gathered about him the nucleus of a social apostolate which will begin an aggressive evangelism throughout the country with the opening of the new year. The social, industrial, and spiritual conditions of our times give a striking significance to the character and work of this new order of preachers and teachers.

AT THE END OF THE CENTURY.

The closing quarter of the nineteenth century has been a period of vast change in the world-life. In the industrial activities of the western civilization there has been an enormous development. Machinery has been perfected beyond the dreams of inventors; trade has been extended to every part of the planet; the international commerce of nations has been marvelous. It has likewise been a period of great intel-

lectual activity. Not that transcendent genius has shone in the realms of science, art and literature, making ours an Augustan age; but a great intellectual gestation has been proceeding. The common man has been reading and thinking. The schoolmaster's influence has been profoundly felt, almost to the materialization of learning. The press, in a hundred forms of periodical, pamphlet and book, has been pouring forth its myriads of scientific and literary leaves for the instruction of the nations. And as if to add yeast to the process oriental thought sacred and secular has been awaking the occult in occidental life and literature.

But one manifest complaint must be brought against our times. Our industrial life and commercial activity and the possibilities which our social system presents for the accumulation of great wealth have combined to elicit the selfishness and mammonism and avarice of the race. As a result we have the maddest pursuit of riches, with its consequent colossal centralization of wealth in the hands of the few, on the one hand, and a vast mass of human poverty with its suffering, upon the other. The struggle is intense. Industrial strife is a war more deadly than that of bullets and bayonets. The inevitable demoralization ensues.

MATERIALIZING OF LIFE.

Life has become materialized. In this process the soul has been stifled. We have not made men; we have made money. Wealth, ease, pleasure, worldliness, mammon, are pursued with frenzied eagerness by frantic multitudes intoxicated by the first poison of the root of evil. Simple virtues have become vices. This materialization and mammonization of life has sapped the springs of the spiritual and the ideal in character. Modify the proposition as we may, the fact abides that worldliness has triumphed over the ideal and the divine, the carnal has overcome the spiritual, and the Cain-man is in the ascendant. Hence the love of the world, the love of the flesh, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, dominate in our present society. Our intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual life, as a virgin, has been drugged,

seduced, betrayed and polluted by the vile sinner, Mammon.

REAWAKENING OF THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE.

The power of the organized church seems so incompetent to meet the worldliness, mammonism and carnality of our times, that grave and serious men have declared that the power of Christianity as a world-religion is now waning. By others it is declared with no small amount of evidence that the organized church is the veriest moral bulwark of these forms of social sin because of her complicity with the industrial and social injustice which is at the bottom of the whole of it. But the virgin soul of the race has always arisen and now arises again. Honest hearts grow sick of this gross materialism stalking about in conventional respectability. Sincere souls long for the ideal, the spiritual, the divine. They weary of the warped, stunted and mutilated life which such materialism begets. Though the holy grail should be found only beyond seas of sacrifice and suffering, on the quest they will start. A new conscience described as the "social conscience" is awakening. New and richer depths are seen in the life and words of the almost rejected Jesus. Men need the fellowship and brotherhood which warm the heart and enrich human experience. Character demands something infinitely deeper than commercial integrity, business honesty and conventional respectability.

A NEW SPRING DAWNING ON WINTER OF DISCONTENT

At the best it is a winter and the world-life needs its springtimes, new outbursts of pent-up divine enthusiasms, of love and sacrifice. And now voices prophetic are causing us to know our sins and are calling us to righteousness and justice. In the light of this new law and new gospel whole heaps of the stuff, men foolishly prize to-day, will be but the foul fertilizer of the newer and better civilization of to-morrow.

The fact is that our social and industrial, commercial and political life, under the light of the new social conscience is seen to be immoral. Since we live in a distinctly social age our whole life is demoralized more or less by our industrial immorality, the essence of which is the basic injustice of our effete competitive system. This age mammonized by the pursuit and power of wealth has given us industrial wrongs and social injustice that must now be met by moralizing and spiritualizing forces.

HOW SHALL WE MEET THE WORLD CRISIS?

Before all the social wrong and injustice must be revealed by the light of moral teaching that shall include all the facts of the common life.

All the industrial realm of life with its ramifications must be moralized, spiritualized, sanctified. And the people must be aroused to repentance and confession of industrial wickedness.

But the work of extending the domain of the moral life to include the social and industrial activities of society can only be done effectively by the spiritual power of God-anointed human character. The life to which men are socially called must somehow be incarnated in human flesh. The word of truth to our times must become flesh. The heart of life, the divine fountain of moral and spiritual energy must be charged anew with the dynamic of divine power, thus generating a new religious impulse deep enough and mighty enough for the great task.

Included in this moral teaching and spiritual awakening there must be the embodiment of that new social order which will be the material expression and outward garment of the new social conscience. Capitalism must yield to Socialism: competition to co-operation: the strife of man against man, of labor against capital, of class against class, inevitable to-day, can only cease by the enthronement of peace among men of good-will, in the industrial democracy of the co-operative commonwealth.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

First. Moral teaching, to include every aspect of our common life, social and economic; second, a message of spiritual emancipation, holding within it the power of transforming the character, and capable of inspiring the social conscience and holding it to its divine mission; third, the outlines of a new social system, the material form for the new individual and social character; these are the three natural elements entering into the work which the world-crisis demands. Herein is the combination of ethical instruction, spiritual transformation, and social reformation.

THE SOCIAL CRUSADE A NEW EVANGELISM.

Though men may well walk with bated breath in the presence of such tasks to which God now calls them, yet they must speak and act, or perish. It is to answer this call to the New Evangelism that the Social Crusade has begun its work.

Prof. Herron has now called about him a group of young men in a social apostolate to proceed with this work, and to render their contribution to social reconstruction. Working under his leadership and inspiration they will devote themselves wholly to this task of the new century. For several years past Dr. Her-

ron has been preaching a great spiritual and social message in his individual capacity as lecturer, as college professor, and as the author of a dozen volumes of prophetic literature.

As his work has widened and the demand for the social message has increased, he has called about him this body of co-laborers. At present the group consists of the writer, and his brother, Rev. Benj. F. Wilson; Rev. W. H. Wise, and Mr. Franklin H. Wentworth. For some time past the first three mentioned have been associated in the Social Crusade work in different parts of the country. Mr. Wentworth is a young business man who for years has been awakened to the great social and spiritual need of the hour. He became greatly inspired with the work of Dr. Herron when he was delivering his lectures in Chicago two years ago. Mr. Wentworth has been in the lecture field preaching his message through such themes as "St. Francis of Assisi and the Revolution of Love," "Mazzini the Apostle of Association," and others of similar character. His business experience gives him excellent qualifications as an executive and he has offered himself as secretary as well as speaker in the new movement.

OPENING THE NEW CAMPAIGN OF THE CRUSADE.

The work of the group will be opened Sunday, January 6, at Central Music Hall, Chicago, at 3:30 p. m., when Dr. Herron will deliver his first sermon in a course of twelve. From this time on the apostolate will go up and down the land, going wherever they are invited and initiating our own work in various cities, in a continuous proclamation of this whole gospel, rallying the people under the new conscience to social and individual righteousness. The work everywhere will include in a comprehensive unity the spiritual, moral and social elements which the corresponding conditions of life and society demand. The workers will give themselves wholly to this task, beginning in the city of Chicago and working from this center outwards. The headquarters of the work is at 609 Ashland block, Chicago, where the secretary, Mr. Franklin H. Wentworth, is in charge, to whom all communications concerning meetings, literature, etc., should be addressed.

We desire to render the largest possible service to the greatest number of people and at the most strategic points, but all invitations to speak and to hold meetings at any point will be carefully considered in our plans. In all cases where we go on invitation we ask only that our expenses be met and that we may have the privilege of presenting the purposes and general needs of our work.

Our paper, *THE SOCIAL CRUSADER*, is a 32-page monthly magazine, full of our thought and an account of our activities. Its subscription price is 50 cents per year. Sample copies may be had by request to the business office, 609 Ashland block, Chicago.

INCARNATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE THE CULMINATION.

We believe that the greatest need of this age is a great moral and spiritual awakening. We know that this awakening must come as an answer to the social needs of our time, and likewise a response to the deep soul needs of the people, and it all must culminate in the incarnation of social justice in the co-operative commonwealth. Dr. Herron, who now enters upon this work, has supreme qualifications as an interpreter of truth in this generation, and this new step of organic activity will delight his many friends and followers everywhere. It is with confidence that we go forth to witness, for we believe that God is on our side and that with us there stands an innumerable host, seen and unseen, who await with divine patience the manifestation of the sons of God, and the coming of the kingdom in the facts and forces of the common life.

Evanston, Dec. 23, 1900.

Economics of the Kingdom of Heaven.

By Prof. George D. Herron.

My purpose in the coming Central Music Hall lecture course, entitled "Economics of the Kingdom of Heaven," is to first state as clearly and plainly as possible the general crisis which seems to be approaching in that part of the world which we know of as Christendom. We cannot watch the manifest development of our times without seeing the approach of a crisis that shall not only test and try, but ultimately change, the whole human order of things, and give us some other kind of a world to live in than the one we are trying to live in now. The economic system of private production and distribution cannot go on a great while, as it will finally fall of its own weight, or be destroyed by the principle of its own existence. Through the fall of this economic system will also fall the institutions rooted in it and dependent upon it. Government, and faith in government, are everywhere breaking down much more rapidly than most of us discern. Whether they be right or wrong, the people are, by a pretty common instinct, feeling that the paraphernalia of government is chiefly used for the

support and increase of great property interests. Likewise, the church has lost its authoritative power, and lost it beyond recall. It is not a question of whether we like to have it so or not; we must recognize the simple fact that it is so, without regard to our likings. The most vital spiritual life of Europe is in the Catholic Church; in both England and America, Protestantism is now a performance, and has ceased to be a faith.

Now I have merely stated in the foregoing the conditions that are bringing the world to judgment. What shall we do about it? What resources have we for building a new world? For our answer we must first look into the human fact to see if there is any manifest historic development. It seems to me that there is. The world is today in the socialist melting pot. Without regard to what we want or do not want, the socialist stage is the next stage of civilization. The processes that are making socialism inevitable are going on under our very eyes with a swiftness approached by no past historic development. Both friend and foe, both tyranny and democracy, are hastening the result.

The next resource is the deepening and widening spiritual hunger which the church is unable to feed. The nature and structure of the church make it philosophically and historically impossible for it to use or rightly direct the great and unrecognized present-day spiritual movement. This movement will not take the word of any authority for anything; it will stand squarely upon reality. It will not place its fulcrum in some other world; it will have to do only with plain, human facts and the organization of these facts. The new spiritual movement manifests itself in many crude ways, and in many unrecognized ways, but it is essentially the outgrowth of the seed which Jesus planted in human life. This passing away of Christianity, and the re-appearing of Jesus in an altogether new religion, this is the spiritual significance of the coming age.

Now my purpose is to present, so far as possible, a religious synthesis of the forces and elements that are making for the new world. I want to show the common root of the religious and economic crises, and show how they must have a common solution. I hope to show the spiritual inherency of materialistic socialism, and point out the nearing lines of convergence between socialism and Jesus' teachings, or his ideal of the kingdom of heaven. I want to show how the socialist accomplishment of economic unity is the only foundation upon which

the principles which Jesus stated can build a truly free and spiritual society.

Then I hope to show, both to those who are socialists and to those who are not socialists, that socialism is in no sense a goal, but a road to the free society which lies immediately the other side of socialism; to present Jesus' teachings concerning the kingdom of heaven as the economic of that free society. To show how they must inevitably result in such a society, if they are ever to be taken seriously, is the sole purpose of this lecture course. Indeed, the lectures of this winter are but introductory to the economic of the kingdom of heaven which I hope to be able to state in the course of four or five years. Of course I do not expect to do more than merely pioneer the way for a better statement. How well or how poorly I shall succeed I do not know; I only know that the undertaking seems to me to be as inevitable as my life. In fact, all my working and thinking, since I was a school-boy, has been a conscious and deliberate preparation for this task. I have absolutely no thought about whether much or little or anything may come of it, or whether I shall ever complete the task. I have neither fears nor hopes to be disappointed. I am simply beginning the work, with such poor equipment as I have, because it seems to me the only thing for me to do in the first place; and in the second place, even if I fail, something will have been done toward spiritualizing the inevitable socialist outcome of the present human situation.

Lecture course to be given by George D. Herron, in Central Music Hall, January 6 to March 24, 1906, under the auspices of the Social Crusade:

1. The Need of a New Religious Synthesis.
2. The Socialist Disclosure of Spiritual Sources.
3. The Recovery of Jesus from Christianity.
4. The Kingdom of Heaven.
5. The Will to Love.
6. The Economic Goal.
7. The Divine Right of Human Need.
8. The Spiritual Basis of Economic Equality.
9. The Reality of Spiritual Equality.
10. The Economic Providence of Faith.
11. The Waste of Saving.
12. Service Its Own Reward.

The Social Democratic Herald of Chicago prints the following quotation from a speech recently delivered by Professor Herron in an explanation of the support which he has felt compelled to give to the Social Democratic movement:

"I came into the socialist movement from a different point of view, perhaps, from many others. I was, as most of you know, a preacher and a teacher in connection with an American college, and I have been seeking to know how the highest ideals of life might be made livable in the world. Whether we take Jesus or Plato or Buddha or Mazzini, the sum of all that they have taught us is—that human life, in order to become livable for the bulk of mankind, in order to become happy and reasonable and healthful and noble must be lived out under what they called the law of love, which, translated into economic terms, might be called the law of co-operation. And out of a passion of soul, out of an infinite yearning to find some way by which that law of love, of co-operation might be realized and change the world from an army of struggling and competing and destroying men into a world that might be indeed a paradise, I came into the economic problem and through that into socialism."

"All political questions are today resolving themselves into economic questions. The politics of the future will be economic politics. Although we are not aware of it, all political questions are already merely property questions. Politics the world over have nothing else to do but be the great agent of great business interests. Socialism comes to make politics economic in an entirely new sense. In fact, all that we have understood by politics will pass away."

Why Commonwealth Failed.

By George Howard Gibson, late of the Colony.

The brotherhood colony in Georgia known as the Christian Commonwealth, is in process of legal dissolution. Most of its members are dispersed and its property is in the hands of a receiver.

In the three or four years of its existence it has given to the world the results of an experience in some respects different from all others to be found in history, and important lessons are to be gathered from it.

AN ECONOMIC FAILURE.

It was an economic failure, and economic failure involves failure in service. Economic disaster drew down upon the colony not because it attempted to bind men together in unselfish relations, but chiefly because it did not bring together people who could work together economically and effectively in the place chosen. The people who came to Commonwealth were for the most part willing and capable workers,

but they found themselves in an economic situation in which they could not produce enough to be self-supporting. They understood the law of love, they were moved by its impulses; but they had not studied with care the necessary means and methods or plans of economic production.

It is not so easy to criticise the Commonwealth attempt intelligently as may at first appear to outsiders. Sometimes failure is necessary—some people must be willing to fail. It is by many failures that the elements of success are at all brought to light. The faith that is willing to give all and face uncertainty and final failure in what appears to be the path of duty, is a faith that shall redeem the world.

SPIRITUAL MOTIVE OF THE SOCIAL EXPERIMENT.

The organizers of the Commonwealth colony were men who looked upon selfishness of every sort as sin. They traced the great part of the world's evils to the selfish struggle one with another after property and power. They believed in brotherhood relations. If all men were ready to enter into brotherhood relations the change would be easy and delightful. But are we individually at liberty to wait for those who are not ready? Where an individual or a few individuals feel conscientiously driven out of the selfish struggle, how are they to live? The Commonwealth people did not see how one can begin to be a brother in the midst of the Ishmaelitish strife by which the people feed, clothe, shelter and otherwise care for themselves. Each was standing alone, separated in his economic interests, and while so separated, while no one cared for another, it seemed to each that he must needs do as the selfish do in trying to buy cheap and sell dear, in seeking to gain as much as possible from others and so accumulate for his own family. The demands of his own family, present or prospective, seem necessarily to exclude neighbor-love. But these people, believing in brotherhood, did not wish to be mere dreamers, theorizers, or idealists. They wished to practice as well as preach love, and they reasoned that by bringing their families and means together and uniting their energies they could live in brotherhood relations and show all men how to be saved.

TRUST IN ORGANIZATION INSTEAD OF LIFE.

What they at first failed to see with sufficient clearness was the need of trusting altogether and always to the spiritual initiative. Unconsciously they trusted organization instead of life, body instead of spirit, numbers instead

of God. Form, or organization, or numbers cannot be depended on to contain and retain the spirit of God.

However wrong, obscurely, subtly wrong, in what they trusted, these Commonwealth people were true to their convictions and heroic in their sacrifices. For the sake of brotherhood relations they together endured poverty for a time and to a degree that would make all selfish people marvel. They attracted the attention of people in all parts of the world, because they were strenuously endeavoring to practice as well as preach brotherhood. It was evident that the people of Commonwealth did not desire to shirk burdens or selfishly run away from the evils of the world, because in all their poverty they persisted in keeping open doors for the destitute, and the destitute continued to come to them. They in no case refused to share everything they had with the poor, with "the least of these." The tramp and the outcast who would stay and work were never turned away.

The leaders at Commonwealth were neither ascetics nor materialists. They considered all things good if rightly used, to supply need. They desired good things, ideal things, to supply everybody's needs. They did not consider poverty good for any class of people except prodigals, but while the oppressed must suffer they wanted to be brothers to the poorest.

Religion and life at Commonwealth were rightly considered one and the same. Labor, being the exercise of love in an unselfish service, was both fellowship and worship. The standard of life which this brotherhood body held up before the world was a singularly noble, exalted ideal, and all the unselfish at Commonwealth were greatly blessed in spirit. There is nothing so sweet as fellowship. The actual joining of heart to heart and life to life and family to family in brotherhood relations constitutes a social incarnation of the spirit of God and brings to earth the fellowship of heaven.

LESSONS OF THE DISPERSION.

It seems a pity that a group with so noble a standard, on which the attention of expectant minds in many countries was centering, should be broken up and dispersed. But the necessity of dispersion teaches an exceedingly important lesson. Love, or the desire to serve, must add to itself wisdom. There are economic laws and conditions which must be regarded. Industrial groups must not be formed in any haphazard fashion. It is not so much the grouping of the workers as it is the self-centered spirit which needs to be changed.

The church ought to be a society of brothers, as at first, a society so emptied of the grasping spirit, so full of the serving, outpouring spirit of Jesus, that "distribution was made to every man according as he had need," "neither was there any among them that lacked." If the church were such a society today it could quickly overcome the evils of the self-seeking world and carry good news to all. We need loving societies, having a clearly defined purpose on the part of members, to serve in every sort of way. But production, as a science and art, should be left in the hands of those who can most economically organize and direct labor. The economic and spiritual are related, but for the sake of greater service should be kept distinct.

It has been demonstrated by experiment that with the best intentions back of attempts to gather men into a visible brotherhood, the kingdom of God cannot be geographically located, incorporated and so extended. "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them." When material good beyond today's bread and a place to work is given or is promised at a certain place, people of a selfish sort are sure to crowd through the gates. Professions are easily made, and periods of probation can be covered by self-restraint. Brotherhood pledges and legal obligations cannot be substituted for the Christ spirit, of course. And people must not be tempted by what they can get to make formal professions.

The Social Gospel, the monthly magazine of the Commonwealth colony, was taken to South Jamesport, New York, by the president and others, and is still being published in improved form by Rev. Ralph Albertson and Prof. James P. Kelley. The breaking up of the Commonwealth brotherhood body released but did not destroy its spirit.

Commonwealth in Retrospect.

By Ralph Albertson, Late of the Colony and Editor of the Social Gospel.

Although the enterprise now classifies among the many failures of idealism, I cannot, at this short perspective, regret it as an undertaking nor begrudge any of the price that it cost. We love our ideals with the whole persistency of life, and we love their concrete expressions, their symbols and, more than all, the crosses upon which they are crucified. The exigencies which determine success or failure

in an enterprise of love cannot destroy the imperishable foundations of the enterprise. More than one house that has been built upon a rock, and better built than was the Christian Commonwealth, has been swept away by the winds and floods. Our confidence was never primarily in the house that man built, but in the Rock upon which still we stand, though unroofed and disorganized.

As an effort of industrial evangelism, not to be segregated nor isolated, Commonwealth will be known as a failure. To some of us it was such an effort from the first. The influx of the poor and needy enabled us to convince ourselves for a while that we should succeed. Open hearts and open hands found expression and proof in open pocketbooks and open doors, and into these a few of the destitute and oppressed entered and were by machinery made equal. While in the main they accepted the theory of the open door which was our one safeguard against selfish segregation, it eventually became plain that the acceptance of the doctrine was void without the spirit of its life. Narrowness and clannishness developed, and the phrases "out in competition" and "the outside world" were too often heard, while "Come ye out of her and be ye separate," as applied to the Babylon of competitive life, was made the text of some of the preaching.

The most serious difficulty, as I now see it, was not the maintaining of the open door itself, but the imparting of the open-door spirit to whomsoever should come and the maintaining of it in whomsoever should stay. And it was the spirit of the open door—the spirit that gave its all to everybody—that was the one excuse for the enterprise. It was that by which we were united to the world, and hoped to help save. The open door was our confession of the common sin, our endorsement of the common responsibility, our carrying of the common burden. It was conceived in us as a message of industrial evangelism. In realizing it there was a measure of success and a measure of failure. As compared with the standard which I take as representing the average church member, the degree of altruism marking the whole undertaking would rank it as a brilliant success; but as compared with the absolute standard by which only we always measured it, it was a failure, and as a failure it will be known.

In so far as it was an effort to obliterate natural marks of individuality it was also unsuccessful. The impression should not be given, however, that any of the people who fairly represented the work we had undertaken failed to

see the weakness and fallacy of a forced, mechanical, unreal equality. This was quite well understood, but it seemed to us an incomparably lesser evil than the unjust inequalities that obtain everywhere. We chose rather to fly to evils that we knew not than to longer be parties in promoting the wicked inequalities of familiar experience. We preferred the imperfections of a mechanical equality to the unrighteousness of a selfish inequality which men call natural. Nevertheless it was our sad experience that the mere persistence of old habits, such as cleanliness on the part of some and its opposite on the part of others, created inequalities that became as great in the local eye as those between the millionaire and the tramp in Cincinnati. We did not have enough social magnanimity to maintain the high level of discriminating love and so prevent our holy vision of brotherhood from becoming a bugaboo of equality which curtailed the efficiency of our services, kept us always without leadership, and retarded both our industrial and spiritual development, and failed after all to keep us from being as naturally unequal as God had made us. We had not consciously wished to defy the nature of things in any respect, yet the form of our organization as well as some unpruned expressions that went out from us destroyed our nice but important discriminations as to natural and necessary inequalities of needs and abilities, and the bugaboo was set up in our midst. Yet, notwithstanding this failure, I am still glad that some people freely gave the whole of the only capital they ever owned to this futile effort to fill up the fearful chasms of unjust, unnatural, selfish human inequalities.

While I should not engage upon another just such enterprise, I consider that as a form of service it was quite justified by its results. I feel very certain that an equal amount of effort and money expended in the regular channels of religious work does not produce on the average nearly so large an aggregate of spiritual growth in individuals as was realized at Commonwealth. Of more importance, moreover, is the fact that thousands of persons, if our impressions were correct, were aroused to a larger social consciousness and awakened to a new vision of social righteousness. This consideration is quite apart from any impulse of idealism. It adds comfort to the consciousness of having tried to do the ideal thing. In the day of defeat we may be permitted to say that it was not only a bold experiment, it was useful.

There are a few people who will always look back upon it as the happiest experience of their lives. Their altruism was appealed to more powerfully than ever before, and they realized a joy of service and a joy of fellowship elsewhere unknown by them. To those whose labors were unceasing, whose sacrifices were considerable, and who for its sake endured persecution and such various hardresses as are known to men and women in whose hearts the cross is planted, Commonwealth will always stand for holy things.

I do not imagine that any appreciable usefulness attaches to the failures or mistakes of the enterprise as warnings or beacons. Wiser men, a fair industrial equipment, or a different location, might have insured economic success; and on the spiritual side, men and women of a higher grade of brain power and love power than we, shall yet certainly succeed in living such a brotherhood life of unity with all the world's need and sin as we failed in. That we were not good enough nor great enough to socially incarnate the love of God is neither proof nor evidence that others will not be.

I find myself quite unable to justify any generalizations as to natural or desirable or feasible social arrangements from the limited experience of so few and sadly limited people under such stringently limiting circumstances. I do not think that the experiment demonstrated anything either one way or the other as to natural or social law. Its disorganization certainly furnishes no such demonstration. There are higher laws than "natural selection" and "following the lines of least resistance," and "to him that hath shall be given," and "every tub must stand on its own bottom." These expressions of popular faith were not so effectively refuted by the poor effort at Commonwealth as we had hoped they might be, but our failures do not establish their truthfulness. The ideal is still truer and safer than the grossness men call common sense.

South Jamesport, N. Y., Dec. 18, 1900.

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"Finding how the unbelief of the best of the poor is occasioned by hopelessness in privation and the sufferings of those dear to them, he was confident that only the personal communion of friendship could make it possible for them to believe in God. Money he saw to be worse than useless, except as a gracious outcome of human feelings and brotherly love."—George Macdonald in "Robert Falconer," p. 404.

Notes from the Workers' World.

The president of the Grand Rapids (Mich.) Gas Light Co. writes us this personal letter that makes the new year happier:

"I mentioned to you that this company desired to give to its employees something more than wages. That we had instituted a profit-sharing plan whereby employees' wages received the same rate of dividend that the stockholders' money received. This profit-sharing plan was but one step in a direction which has been followed for several years past. We first abolished Sunday labor for the stokers at the works, but in doing so continued to pay them in full for that day. Then there was a 10 per cent advance in wages to meet the added expense of living, incidental to the general prosperity. Then there was a Christmas pay-roll where each employee received an additional day's pay, but no employee received less than \$2.00. This takes the place of the customary Christmas turkey now so generally established. The social gathering feature takes place in the form of a New Year's eve musical, supper and dance. The employees furnish the talent in part and the company furnishes the rest. We want to keep on going, and if you have an idea that you think we can successfully and practically adopt I will be glad to recommend it to our board of directors."

An editorial in one of the leading papers of that city adds to the above facts another regarding the founder of the Neighborhood House Social Settlement there and comments as follows:

"Now Mrs. M. R. Bissell, a lady who possessed business ability sufficient to take up the affairs of the great Bissell Carpet Sweeper company upon the death of her husband a number of years ago and carry it on with increased success, throws open the doors of her beautiful home, invites every one of her large army of employees to walk in and accept her hospitality for an evening. Mrs. Bissell is 'only a woman,' but she has been more apt in solving the labor question than thousands of men who have been studying it all their lives. She has succeeded in establishing the most kindly feeling between herself and the men who have made her fortune, and all criticism is silenced and all friction removed by her action. The country needs more men like Mrs. Bissell. This expression may seem to require a little editing, but there is no clearer way to put it. When there are more such employers as Mrs. Bissell and the Grand Rapids Gas Company, there will be fewer strikes, lockouts, and other labor difficulties.

"It is doubtful if there is another city in the country where there is shown such a disposition to do the 'square thing' among employers of labor as in Grand Rapids. There may be an occasional Shylock who enjoys himself best when he can exact the most from his employees and give the least in exchange, but in the main there is a disposition to be fair and liberal among those at the head of our great enterprises."

An interesting article in the November issue of the Political Science Quarterly deals with the question of the wages paid working-women and attempts to find an explanation for the fact that women do not, for the same work, receive the same return as their brother workers. The writer's conclusions are "that in nearly all the cases where men and women perform the same work the competition takes place in the lower grades of efficiency, while in the upper grades men alone are employed." A significant fact is that at piece work where men and women are employed side by side, men workers earn more than women. The writer, Mr. Hammond, concludes that "the wages of women compared with those of men are lower than is the productivity of their work. Women's lower standard of living, their partial dependence on other means of support and their lack of combination prevent them from obtaining their true economic wages."

One of the events of the labor world in Chicago during the last days of November was the passing of the National Industrial Trades-Union which was organized for the purpose of assisting the Building Contractors' Council in its long fight against the Building Trades Council. The membership of this organization at one time threatened to make it a formidable competitor of the affiliated unions, and it seems to have greatly aided the contractors in their fight. The officers and members of the organization have, however, turned almost in a body to the affiliated unions composing the Building Trades Council.

A recent editorial in the Chicago Times-Herald places the loss inflicted by the lockout upon the building interests of Chicago at \$14,000,000. In view of the fact that a large share of this money would have gone into the hands of the organized labor the pitiful waste of the struggle is most apparent.

A somewhat pessimistic view of "Labor Legislation in New Zealand" is contained in the report of U. S. Consul Dillingham. The working of the statute of 1894 concerning compulsory arbitration eliminates the individual workingman as a factor in industrial competition. A non-associated workingman has no status under the statute. The act in effect abolishes contract and restores status and it has been recently decided by the New Zealand Court of Appeals that a court of arbitration has power to compel employers to give trade-unionists preference in a particular industry. The practical working of this statute seems to be, under this interpretation, to compel the employer to deal with the labor union and to render the employment of the non-union man possible only after the employer has established by long and expensive litigation the equal capability of the non-union man. Contract relation between employer and employee seems to have been rendered practically impossible by the act. Mr. Dillingham's conclusion seems to be that the industrial development of New Zealand has been and is being retarded by the statute which has created "a country without strikes."

The "Economic Position of Women" is discussed in the Journal of the Department of Labor of New Zealand for October, 1900. The economic position of women in New Zealand seems to be little better than in the United States, and to be attributed in a measure to the same causes. "Women are kept out of certain skilled trades not by legal restrictions but by the men's union." To prove this the printing trade both in England and in the colonies is instanced, it being shown that a concerted effort has been made and with considerable success to force women workers out of the trade entirely. The factory and mining laws discriminating against women workers are assigned as another reason for the disadvantageous position occupied by women workers. The problem of domestic service is also seemingly as great in New Zealand as in America.

The International Cigar Makers' Union contributed \$250,000 to help the 6,000 cigar makers of New York City tide over their recent strike emergency, although only 700 of them were members of the Union, which, however, gained 2,000 members by the "lost strike."

"We are all booked 'steerage passage' for some part of our life's voyage."—Horace W. Houlding.

While the Women's clubs are being agitated the country over by the difference of opinion over admitting to their National Federation a colored woman delegate from a club belonging to the Massachusetts State Federation, the following action of the Chicago Federation of Labor, taken Dec. 3rd, stands in strange contrast. Although the points at issue in each constituency may not be parallel, the one cannot fail to carry a comment on the controversy within the other.

The concluding portion of the appeal to negro labor to join the trades unions is as follows:

"The colored man, more simple in his ways, with fewer wants, and these more easily satisfied, is content under conditions which are irksome to the white workman, and he is today, perhaps unconsciously, being used to try and drag the white man down to a level lower than his was before he was freed from bondage.

"It is to remedy this that we appeal to him, to welcome him into our fold, to elevate him to our standard, to better his condition, as well as our own. The trades union movement knows no race or color; its aims are the betterment of the condition of the wage-earner, whatever his color or creed.

"In this spirit we appeal to the colored workman to join with us in our work, come into our trade unions, give us your assistance, and in return receive our support, so that race hatred may be forever buried, and the workers of the country be united in a solid phalanx to demand what we are justly entitled to—a fair share of the fruits of our industry."

Social Progress in the Churches.

That church serves its cause, if not itself, the best which serves the community most. So seems to think one of the most spiritually-minded and evangelistic of our younger pastors near Chicago. For he writes: "We thought the Bible Class would better be held at the High School in a town where it is not the custom for men to attend church. The Red Cross Fund for Galveston was set rolling at our prayer meeting, but I advised that it should be made a town affair. I did this to reach the town and bring the church to their notice, rather than have it a petty prayer meeting affair and glorify the church in our denominational paper. The whole contribution shall be sent in the name of the town, not the church. The purpose of this is to open the hearts, widen the sympathies and interests of the people—salvation by grace, the grace of giving."

Winnetka, one of the most delightful suburbs of Chicago, enjoys the real distinction of holding a "Town Meeting" in a church and a "People's Club" holding Sunday evening services in the Town Hall. Both are of unique interest and value. Their "Town Meeting" grew out of the desire of the first settlers to give expression to the awaking consciousness of their village community. Gathering within the larger circle the spirit and constituency which had expressed itself in smaller and exclusive literary clubs, the "Winnetka Town Meeting" aimed to rally the whole citizenship of the village for social co-operation as the New England colonial towns did for political purposes. For ten years it has afforded a public platform for considering all village interests, besides affording a strong center for promoting the social unification of all its residents. The genuine democratic fellowship among those who would otherwise never have met and mingled has been as delightful as it has proved profitable. The programs have included recreative, social and educational features, which have been supplied principally by residents of the village, who have on occasion been supplemented by specialists from without. The "Town Meeting" is taking on a new lease of life in becoming an exchange or clearing house for all public interests, including the public school and the library boards, clubs and village improvements, and is really for the suburb what Mr. Stanton Coit intended his Neighborhood Guilds to be for the city center.

The "Winnetka People's Club" was organized last winter by twelve men representing six religious affiliations, to provide the kind of a Sunday evening service best adapted to the diverse religious constituency of the village. It has succeeded in rallying and holding a very large proportion of the whole people, including Catholics, Hebrews, Ethical Culturists, and those not connected with any ecclesiastical organization. It is an adaptation of the English Pleasant Sunday Afternoon to an American suburban community.

New Type of Temperance Literature.

Here surely is a new and hopeful style of temperance appeal addressed to pastors in the form of a letter by Mr. E. F. Walker, of Evanston, who is a third party Prohibitionist, and, while in temporary residence at the Commons recently followed up the trail of Mr. Melandy's investigation of the social function of the sa-

loon: "It is claimed that saloons ruin twice as many lives as all church and evangelical agencies redeem. How long will we let this go on? We must fight the saloon by every honorable method, even between campaigns. Each member of your congregation can help.

"Here are a Few Practical Ways: Every voter should insist that his alderman work for suitable public toilet arrangements—as many men patronize the bar of a saloon only because they feel under obligations for the toilet necessities that the saloon alone affords. Every employer should visit the homes of his employes to make sure he is paying them wages large enough so they can live in decency and comfort, and can send their children to school—and that none are compelled to frequent saloons for warmth, for food, for recreation or for an attractive place in which to read or talk. Christian capitalists who want to put their religion into their investments should be urged to erect model tenements and to run good, cheap restaurants with reading rooms attached.

"Your Sunday School could keep many persons from drinking liquor by giving as a Christmas gift a drinking fountain for some saloon-ridden district. The young people of your church could directly overcome evil by good, by organizing near some saloon a wholesome club, and making all welcome who would simply agree that in the club rooms they would not gamble, drink, swear nor use obscene language. The women of your church could accomplish inestimable good by establishing cooking classes, as many men and women drink who would not if they knew how to prepare nourishing dishes."

Social Spirit in Education.

The first Christmas celebration of the Chicago Institute was prefaced by these words, introductory to the program, which were read by Col. F. W. Parker:

"The thought underlying our Christmas exercise is the triumph of light over darkness, of good over evil, of life over death.

"Christmas is conceived, first, as the Festival of the Winter Solstice, an expression of joy at the turning back of the earth to the sun, the fount of life.

"The first part, devoted to the solar myths of the Scandinavian, Celt, Greek and Egyptian, given not chronologically, but in order of their deeper meaning, brings out this idea.

"The second part tells the story of the birth of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, who came

to irradiate the darkness of men's souls, the spiritual analogue of the material fact.

"The third part is a summary review at the end of the century (1) of the remotest past, personified here by the primitive type of hunter, shepherd and farmer, and (2) of historic times, personified by types of the civilizations of the three continents—Asia, Africa and Europe. Each brings his special gift to the present, to the child of today.

"The mother voices her hopes for her boy, acknowledges indebtedness to all the past and invokes the help of teachers and of all good men and women."

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

"The residents of Chicago Commons, to the teachers and pupils of Chicago Institute send Christmas greetings:

"We gratefully acknowledge your beautifully considerate thought for our noble army of infantry marshalled this morning around our kindergarten Christmas tree here under the smoke and dust of far down-town Chicago. From sunny Italy and colder Norway; from the German fatherland and far-off Iceland; from the Emerald Isle and the Isle of Man and a dozen other mother countries come these little soldiers to serve in the great and peaceful army of industry to work with all the rest of us in building up one greater nation out of all the great peoples of the world.

"Your beautiful little baskets of sweetmeats will sweeten not only the taste, but the hearts of many in whose lives deep poverty causes bitter sorrow and suffering—and all the more because the candy was home-made at school.

"In behalf of the children, the kindergartners and our residents, I am, Gratefully yours."

Following Prof. Taylor's address on "The Social Extension of the Public School," at the capitol in Springfield, before the Illinois Teachers' Association, the state superintendent moved that "all rules regulating appropriations be suspended and that \$250 be appropriated to the work of Chicago Commons." This most unexpected and generous co-operation, together with the annual gift of the Cook county teachers, assure the maintenance of the kindergarten in the neighborhood of the Old Commons, whatever betides the rest of the work that should be retained there. Perhaps this is the harbinger of other co-operation which will enable us to maintain the "Old Commons" where it is most needed and with adequate equipment.

Notes from Other Settlements.

The University Settlement of New York has opened a branch at No. 38 King street. The site chosen is in the center of the largest Italian quarter of the city. There are five residents, all of whom are women, and Mrs. Bond Thomas is the head worker. A five-story building has been leased and fitted up with lecture, club-rooms and resident quarters. The locality is admitted by the Italians themselves to be degenerating, and a special investigation will be made of the social and economic conditions in the community. The padrone system, sweating system, and private banks, which are so often untrustworthy, are some of the evils with which these people are surrounded.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, of the University Settlement, have made an offer of three prizes of \$25, \$15, \$10 each for essays on either of the following subjects: "Comforts and Discomforts of Tenement House Life," "Social Reform Immediately Practicable on the East Side." The competition is open to the Guild members and has been enthusiastically accepted. The settlement also reports that three new trades unions have become their tenants, namely, the Lithographers' Union, the Franklin Association No. 23—a union of pressmen—and the Women's Hatmakers' Union. The last is one of the few women's unions of this city and is composed of hatmakers operating in this vicinity. Though the organization is not large, great difficulty was found in finding a meeting place suitable for women. The settlement was glad to provide the desired room.

The Greenpoint, situated in the northern corner of Brooklyn, is under the direction of the Pratt Institute Neighborhood Association, and teachers from Pratt Institute conduct its classes. There are a number of Germans in the neighborhood, and the many classes in the domestic arts are very popular among them. Twenty-five nationalities are represented in the immediate vicinity, Americans, Irish and Germans predominating. The Irish and Germans seem to make the social rules for the community, the young generation following in the footsteps of the older and clinging to the old customs and conditions. The settlement house is part of a model tenement. The residents live on the fifth and sixth floors. It is a unique setting for settlement life to be under the same roof with nearly one hundred families and yet have some privacy.

The Neighborhood Guild Association of Columbus, Ohio, though little more than a year old, has just completed a three-story brick building for Guild purposes. The Godman Guild House, as it is called, is well equipped for social service with domestic science and manual training rooms and public baths. The top floor is arranged for the living-rooms of the residents. At the second annual meeting of the Association, held Nov. 8, the House was formally opened, and during the day over 700 of the neighbors took the opportunity to visit the new neighborhood center.

From the head residents, Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Schott, who as the guests of Chicago Commons have been studying the Chicago settlements, we learn the interesting fact that for nearly a year after they initiated the movement which has grown so rapidly into the well-equipped Neighborhood Guild House, they knew nothing of the existence of social settlements. Having seen the necessity of more practical and continuous effort than the conventional mission work in which they had been volunteer workers, they simply went to work to supply the need of the most destitute population in Columbus. The subsequent gift of the building grew out of the donor's interest in Toynbee Hall.

Work has begun on the new Northwestern University Settlement building in Chicago, which is to be erected at Augusta and Noble streets, a few blocks northwest of their present site. The plans designed by Pond & Pond, architects of the Commons building, call for a thoroughly modern structure, to cost over \$40,000, of which \$25,000 has already been contributed by one friend of the settlement. It will be built of brick, four stories high, covering an area of 78 by 100 feet. The ground floor of the building is to be devoted to a kindergarten, men's club-rooms, and reading room. The kindergarten looks out over a sunken garden, where its children will play. On the main floor is a large coffee-room, with kitchen adjoining, and library, reception room and office. The third floor contains a dining-room, five club-rooms, including a domestic science equipment. The north section of the building provides for a large auditorium and a gymnasium of the same size. The building is to be completed about May 1st. The settlement has done an excellent work for ten years. Mrs. Henry Wade Rogers continues to be the president of its council.

Stories for Children under Ten

WITH CALL NUMBERS OF THE CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY.

I. 3101. Fairy Tales—Andersen.
 H. 3192. Mother Goose in Prose—Baum.
 H. 1077. Editha's Burglar—Burnett.
 H. 1078. Little Saint Elizabeth—Burnett.
 H. 1178. Admiral's Caravan—Carryl.
 H. 1089. Davy and the Goblin—Carryl.
 H. 1182. Brownies Around the World—Cox.
 H. 305. Adventures of a Brownie—Craik.
 G. 901. Little Lame Prince—Craik.
 H. 310. Fairy Tale Books—Craik.
 H. 4161. Things Will Take a Turn—Harraden.
 H. 4175. Little Mr. Thimble Finger—Harris.
 H. 1602. Letters from a Cat—Jackson.
 H. 2008. How Tommy Saved the Barn—Kaler.
 H. 2014. Left Behind—Kaler.
 H. 4601. Teddy and Carrots—Kaler.
 H. 2012. Tim and Tip—Kaler.
 H. 489. Water Babies—Kingsley.
 F. 5095. Moon Prince—Munkittrick.
 H. 1858. Chrystal, Jack & Co.—Munroe.
 H. 1857. Derrick Sterling—Munroe.
 H. 2053. Dear Daughter Dorothy—Plympton.
 H. 2122. Penelope Prig—Plympton.
 H. 2126. Wanolasset (The Little-one-who-laughs)—Plympton.
 H. 2146. Pepper and Salt—Pyle.
 H. 2314. Little Jarvis—Seawell.
 H. 2426. Red Mustang—Stoddard.
 H. 2421. Talking Leaves—Stoddard.
 H. 2424. Two Arrows—Stoddard.
 H. 2611. Old, Old Fairy Tales—Valentine.
 H. 2760. Fairy Folk of Blue Hill—Wesselhoeft.
 H. 2761. Frowzle, the Runaway—Wesselhoeft.
 H. 767. The Birds' Christmas Carol—Wiggin.
 H. 2636. Story Hour—Wiggin & Smith.
 H. 304. Mischief's Thanksgiving—Woolsey.

(The above list was chosen from a list issued by the Milwaukee Public Library.)

H. 3292. Little Miss Gay—Brown.
 H. 1603. Hunter Cats of Connorloa—Jackson.
 H. 2737. Ingleside—Yechton.
 H. 3513. In Storyland—Coolidge.
 H. 1344. Stories of Old Greece—Firth.
 H. 2227. Joyous Story of Toto—Richards.
 H. 2230. Toto's Merry Winter—Richards.
 H. 951. Seven Little Sisters—Andrews.
 H. 3280. True Story of Grant—Brooks.
 H. 3272. True Story of Lincoln—Brooks.
 H. 3276. True Story of Washington—Brooks.
 H. 1242. Stories of American Life—Eggerton.
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A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement Point of View.

GRAHAM TAYLOR, Editor.

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EDITORIAL

THE Commons presents to its readers this month a striking contrast in the retrospect of a closed Christian communistic experiment, drawn in shadow by its founders, and in the prospect of an opening Social Crusade, drawn in the light of a new hope by the one who initiated it and another who assumes its leadership.

This journal is not afraid to let men speak for themselves. It welcomes the light that comes to the social movement either from phases of it that fail, or from new enterprises of faith and hope in the progress of the race.

A more pathetically heroic adventure of faith than that which at least outwardly failed in the attempt to establish "The Christian Commonwealth" in Georgia, we know not of. Those may criticise or sneer who will, but the brave men and women who dared to fail may issue their challenge to those who come after them in the words which Bunyan puts into the mouth of Mr. Valiant-For-Truth as he answered his summons: "My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage and my courage and skill to him that can get it, my marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles."

Whatever may be thought of the specific aims and methods of the Social Crusade, the writer knows the men who have so nobly sacrificed to initiate this social propagandism and believes in them—the loftiness of their ideals and the loyalty of their spirit. They, too, know him well enough to let him dissent in public, as he does face to face with them from some of their positions, and yet believe in him and his loyalty to the social progress of the common Christian cause.

Irrespective, as Prof. Herron says, "of whether we like to have it so or not," and without regard to "what we want or do not want," we enter our protest against such indiscriminate

statements as "in both England and America Protestantism is now a performance and has ceased to be a faith," and "the church has lost its authoritative power and lost it beyond control."

If by the latter phrase Dr. Herron means ecclesiastical authority over conscience and physical force to enforce it, we gladly concur, but if we are to infertherefrom that the authoritative power of what the church as a whole stands for and bears witness to "has been lost beyond control" we demur. For never, in our judgment, so much as now have the hearts and consciences of men made quicker and wider response to the authority of so much of the Christian ideal as the church may be admitted even by its critics to preach and practice.

If by the assertion that Protestantism "has ceased to be a faith" includes by far the greatest number of Protestant Christians and churches that have ever been enlisted in the application of Christianity to the social conditions of the common life, again in loyalty to fact we challenge the charge. That the great mass of the churches and their members, both Catholic and Protestant, eastern and western, have never been even conscious of their social mission we grant. But in evidence that the social consciousness and conscience of the churches are awakening as never before, we cite as only one among very many signs of the new and better times coming, the "Social Apostolate" itself, which can hardly account for its own name and spirit and sphere of influence without paying tribute to the faith extant in the churches. Probably the difference between us might fade away before a large enough or small enough definition of the church. At any rate neither the social movement nor the gospel of the Kingdom can come to its consummation without the realization of the church idea and, we believe, without the agency of the churches.

Moreover, the socialism of Mr. Wilson and his associates and that of the Socialist Labor parties of the world are hardly yet to be identified, in justice to the convictions of either. They need each other and are growing together. But in ideal, spirit and method the "Co-operative Commonwealth" of the new crusade is not yet identical with that of the regular line socialism. Prof. Herron's timely plea for unity among socialists must meet with a very generous response before the "Social Apostolate" will be recognized as an integral part of the main body of socialists. If in America and England

the widely prevalent socialist movement and the avowedly Christian forces are ever to influence each other, there must be some such advance toward common ground, as Professor Herron and the Social Apostolate seek to man, and such as Naumann is rallying both to occupy in Germany.

THE COMMONS will hereafter be issued on the first of each month. The February number will be largely devoted to the discussion of Juvenile dependency and delinquency, especially in Chicago. It will contain copious extracts from Miss Edith I. Clarke's report to the University of Michigan of her investigation made under the direction of Chicago Commons, together with brief supplementary articles by official representatives of the Juvenile Court, the probation officers and the child-saving work of the city.

THOSE who hold with us the conviction that social unification is the duty of the hour will share the satisfaction we take in chronicling the progress of the movement to federate the religious workers in Chicago and elsewhere. It is spontaneous, and spreads rapidly. All last year a little group of pastors, representing several denominations, who were at work on the hardest of the downtown fields, met socially to relieve their loneliness and compare their many discouragements and few encouragements. At their initiative a conference on institutional methods of church work was held in October, and succeeded beyond all anticipation in rallying representatives of practically all religious affiliations in the city, a Catholic priest participating with a fraternal cordiality that was notable. The value and practicability of federating those in all religious fellowships who are ready for personal co-operation was thus demonstrated. A committee of twenty-five was appointed to formulate a basis for a federation of religious workers. (Rev. H. F. Ward, 4648 Marshfield avenue, Chicago, secretary, and Graham Taylor, 140 North Union street, chairman.)

Meanwhile other groups had been forming. One organized to embody the spirit and work of the World's Fair Parliament of Religion; another constituted an Interdenomination Club. Under the pressure of the alarming prevalence of vice throughout the city, the several ministers' unions appointed a joint committee to initiate legal and moral action to meet the situation. A large proportion of the individuals included in these groups meets at the Central

Y. M. C. A. January 21st, at 1:30 p. m., to organize the Chicago Federation of Religious Workers on such basis as they may adopt. Prof. Charles R. Henderson will submit for discussion a provisional formulation of the principles and organization, broad and simple enough to federate all who will co-operate in promoting the great interests common to all religious workers.

To find a group representing Chicago's best families, most refined wealth and broadest culture devoting themselves to the investigation and study of the city's great housing problem inspires a new and boundless social hope. The devotion by representatives of "the leisure class" of their travel, wide commercial relationships, means for acquiring literature, pictures and object lessons and their trained intelligence to the scientific investigation of what is being done or should be attempted, both by investing capital and public spirited philanthropy or municipal action, will prove as valuable to them as to the communities in which they live and for the common good of which they should labor.

The Kings' Daughters in Burlington, Iowa, maintain "Free Rest and Waiting Rooms," which are filling a social necessity that is very manifest in almost every community, large or small. Here "all are welcome." People from the stores and factories bring their cold lunches to these hospitable rooms and supplement them by a cup of coffee, tea or milk at two cents, a sandwich for three cents, a bowl of hot soup for four cents or a piece of pie for three cents. A good meal is furnished for twenty cents. Shoppers from the surrounding country wait for friends in the parlors, and have their parcels delivered or checked. Limited provisions are made for lodging transient guests at thirty cents a night and a room is reserved for gratuitously furnishing a bed to any one who may be unfortunately stranded for a night or two. The free toilet and lavatory purposes are by no means the least of these considerate and for the most part self-supporting ministrations to those human necessities which well-disposed people so generally ignore, and in furnishing which the saloon finds its permanent roostage. Why is this not a legitimate function of the village, burrough or municipality?

Prof. Henderson's Handbook of Social Settlements sells for 60c not 50c as advertised last month.

Chicago Commons Items.

The residents informally "received" such of their neighbors who dropped in to see the new building on the afternoon and evening of New Year Day. The gymnasium excites more demonstrative interest than any other feature of the whole plant, not only among the men and boys, but among the girls and younger women.

It is the experience of a life-time to watch the pleasure and surprise grow upon the faces of our neighbors as the extent, purpose and adaptation of floor after floor dawn upon them while being shown through the building.

The event of the holidays of most significance to the settlement and its neighborhood was the rendering of the greater part of the oratorio of the "Messiah" by the noted Apollo Musical Club. As a part of its social service to the community this club of busy people have for two years co-operated with the University of Chicago Settlement and Chicago Commons in offering to the people of the stockyards district and the Seventeenth ward the privilege of hearing the "Messiah." If this social chivalry was ever regarded as chimerically sentimental, the first year's experiment demonstrated it to be the most practical success. The people of both of these widely separated districts most enthusiastically responded to this overture of their friends. They crowded the halls, listened with a keenness of interest, betokened by a riveted attention and alert hearing which were most noteworthy, and greeted the soloists and choruses which they liked best with discriminating and heartiest applause. Last year the only place we could provide for the concert was a beer-hall, where, on either side of the stage where the Hallelujah chorus was being rendered, were invitations to the bar downstairs. This year every seat we could possibly crowd into our auditorium was occupied and the little standing space remaining also. Over five hundred paid twenty-five cents to enjoy this feast of song, the echoes of which are ringing all over the ward, as they did for months last year. To the conductor of the Apollo Club, the eminent soloists, the accompanist and the chorus of sixty voices we offer not only our thanks, but our congratulations for the triumph which they have achieved.

The Pleasant Sunday Afternoons have had a great start in the new auditorium. The program for December, announced in the last number of *THE COMMONS*, was carried out with

great success. During the six weeks succeeding Mrs. J. D. Follett describes the Chautauqua Assemblies and courses of study with a fine series of slides; Prof. Shaler Mathews, of the University of Chicago, makes real the Castle and Town Life of the Middle Ages, aiding his verbal description with many stereopticon views of historic sites and ruins; Miss Bessie Lay provides a varied musical program, rendered by soloists, instrumental and vocal, and a quartette; Thos. H. Stark and Henry S. Sawyer give their Tone Talk, illustrating in speech and song the music of all nations; Rev. C. L. Fiske, with his Berea Church Choral Society, render the oratorio, "The Galilean," and Mr. Falk, of our Tabernacle Church Choir, furnishes a sacred concert.

The attendance upon these occasions is as satisfactory in its very representative character as in the numbers who gather every Sunday afternoon in goodly fellowship. The ladies of the Commons are at the door to receive the neighbors, and the occasion is made as home-like and social as possible. Instead of completing the evening service of the Tabernacle Church, held in the same place, its audiences are apparently being built up from the people who come to the building for the first time to attend the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon.

The co-operation of the organizations jointly occupying the new building is very gratifying. The Woman's Club has already enough money in hand to go far toward furnishing the club-rooms, which, supplemented by what the Progressive Club and the Ladies' Aid provide, will well equip this fine suite of rooms and kitchen. The men's clubs have assumed the responsibility of meeting the expense incurred in finishing the space designed for shower baths and lockers, so that it can be temporarily used by them for club-rooms until the Men's Annex is erected. In furnishing their rooms some fraternal help has been received from friends, who also furnish the reception hall on the second floor in a parlor-like way, thus giving a home atmosphere to the children's floor and the approach to the club-rooms.

The most generous co-operation between the settlement and the church is evinced in adjusting the payment of expense for maintaining the space jointly occupied by them. The Commons, in addition to the gratuitous service of its warden as pastor, pays \$600 a year toward the support of the church, and the Tabernacle offers \$75 a month to begin with as its share of the current obligations involved.

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